



**Written Testimony for the Record Submitted by
Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

Submitted to the Joint Committee on Judiciary

**Hearing on
H.B. No. 5509 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE PAYMENT OF ALIMONY AND
CHILD SUPPORT**

**Hearing Held March 19, 2012
Written Testimony Submitted March 19, 2012**

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee:

The Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is writing today to express our opinion regarding Raised Bill 5509: An Act Concerning the Payment of Alimony and Child Support. CCADV is a network of 18 domestic violence agencies across the state that provide a comprehensive range of services to victims and their families. In the last fiscal year, those agencies collectively served more than 54,000 men, women, and children who were impacted by domestic violence.

We write today to express the Coalition's opposition to Raised Bill 5509. If passed, this bill will restrict the duration of alimony payments to ex-spouses and severely limit the Court's ability to deviate from the formula for calculating payment amounts dictated by the bill. It does not take into consideration any arrangements that were made between the two parties before the marriage deteriorated such as one partner remaining at home to care for the children. Nor does it consider the fact that in many marriages, although one partner does hold an official position within their spouse's business dealings, they nonetheless provide informal services to support those affairs, such as entertaining associates or helping with paperwork. As such, one spouse's income is often heavily reliant upon their partner's efforts, although no paper trail may exist as evidence of that fact.

In cases where domestic violence exists within the relationship, restriction of alimony in such an inflexible fashion can also serve as an additional control mechanism in the abuser's arsenal. If a victim understands that her ability to leave a violent relationship does not afford her the option of economic independence, it may force her to stay in a relationship that can become increasingly abusive.

As a Coalition working to keep all domestic violence victims safe, we must oppose this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns.